# A brief clarification about
# Nuh Ha Mim Keller

*"Whoever has no sheikh, has the devil as his Sheikh."* - Nuh Keller ['Tareeqa Notes' Pg. 2 ]

Nuh Ha Mim Keller, an American Sufi Sheikh, became Muslim in 1977 and moved to Jordan where he currently resides. Keller claims to be a scholar of Islamic Fiqh. However, some troubling points can be found in his published works. We have listed and commentated some of his many mistaken statements and ideas, in order to expose his faults, lest the people follow the wrong ideas into misguidance and self-ruin

## 1. Following the Sheikh to death, and Setting aside one's intellect !

- Keller says: "The conduct of the disciple towards the sheikh… consists of five things: following what the sheikh says, even when something else seems better; avoiding what he forbids, even if it means ones death; upholding the sheikhs honor be he present or absent, dead or alive; fulfilling the sheikhs rights to the degree possible, without remissness."
- He continues: "... Suspending ones intellect, knowledge, and leadership except as the sheikh confirms."
- (Reference 2. Pg. 102-103)

## 2. Overly praises the following problematic figures:

A. **Abd Al-Wahab Shaarani** is praised by Keller as a " Sha'afi scholar and prolific author in works in Sufism, sacred law and tenants of faith…"(Reference 1 pg 1023)

**Comment:**

However here are two examples of what Ash-Shaarani narrated in his writings:

i) He writes: "a man would not attain the levels of the siddiqeen, until he leaves his wife as if she was a widow, his kids as if they were orphans, and takes refuge in dogs pens."(in At-Tassawuf, Wal Masdar Pg 58)

ii) Ash-Shaarani also praised a celebrated sufi, who "cut of his own private part in the beginning of his 'Jathbah' a mystic Sufi state." (in Al-Akhlaaq Al-Matbuliyyah Vol. 3 Pg. 179)

B. **Ibn Arabi**

Keller and other sufis refer to Ibn Arabi as: "The greatest Sheikh, 'Al-Shaykh Al-Akbar'…(who is) widely regarded as a friend (wali) of Allah most high" (Reference 1 Pg. 1080).

The following quote is an example from Ibn Arabi's work:

"The consolation (comfort) of Pharaoh was with the belief Allah gave him when he was drowning. So Allah took him pure and purified. There was no impurity in him since He took him in his belief before he had acquired any wrong actions. Islam effaces what was before it. He (Allah) made him (Pharaoh) a sign of His concern so that none might despair of the mercy of Allah, for "no one despairs of solace from Allah except for the unbelievers." (12:87) If Pharaoh had been of those who despair, he would not have embarked on belief (Imaan). Musa, peace be upon him, was, as the wife of Pharaoh said, "a source of delight for me and for you. Do not kill him. It may well be that he will be of use to us." That is what happened. Allah gave them use of Musa, although they were not aware that he was a prophet who would destroy the kingdom of Pharaoh and his family. (The Seal of the Wisdom of Sublimity in the Word of Musa)"

**Comment:**

(1) Contrary to Ibn Arabi's statement the Quran clearly states that the Pharaoh died as a kaafir! See for example verse: "And indeed we went Musa with our Ayat and a manifest authority. To Pharaoh and his chiefs, but they followed the command of Pharaoh, and the command of Pharaoh was no right guide. He will go ahead of his people on the day of resurrection, and will lead them into the fire…" (Surah Hud 11:96-98)

(2) Regardless of Ibn Arabi's statement, the simple fact is that Keller is quoting a man who was declared a kaafir by countless well-reputed Muslim scholars. Below are some such statements:

i) Imam ibn Katheer in his book of Islamic history- Al-bidaya Wal Nihaya comments on ibn Arabi "He has a book named Beads of Wisdom in which there are many things that are apparently clear kufr."

ii) Imam adh-Dhahabi said (in Siyar 'Alam an-Nubala) that "if ibn Arabi's book (Beads of wisdom) does not contain clear Kufr, then there is no Kufr in the world!

iii) Imam 'Izz ibn abdul Salam said about Ibn Arabi: "(he is) an evil liar sheik who claims that this world is eternal (i.e. was not created by Allah) and embraces promiscuity."

iv) Also, a prominent Hanafi Scholar, Imam Bukhari Al-Hanafi, declared that: "The one who does not consider Ibn Arabi a kaafir, then he himself is a kaafir !

C. **Ibn Al-Farid (References 3 Page 18)**

In describing the hadra (public Dhikr), Keller said: "Singers near the sheikh, in solo or chorus, deliver mystical odes to the rhythm of the group; high spiritual poetry from masters like Ibn al-Farid..."

**Comment:**

Ibn al-Farid was a Sufi poet who died in 632 H. Imam adh-Dhahabi in his biographical works – Siyar 'Alam an-Nubala- said about Ibn al-Farid: that he filled his poetry with Ittihad[1]. "If his poetry is not clear Ittihad (kufr), then there is no kufr or misguidance in this world. O' Allah inspire us with guidance, piety, and protect us from desires. O' Scholars of Islam don't you get angry (by this) for the sake of Allah? There is no power except Allah." It is strange that Nuh Keller describes this same poetry as "high spiritual poetry."

## 3. Saying that people can see Prophet Muhammad (saw) while Awake !

-Keller states that certain Dua's allow a person to see the Prophet (saw) while awake!

About the Dua 'al-Yaqutiyya' Nuh says: "whoever regularly recites it three times, morning and evening, shall frequently see the Prophet, both awake and asleep, in the sensory and the spiritual." (Reference 2. Pg. 88-89)

**Comment:** This claim clearly contradicts the Qur'aan and Sunnah which both confirm the death of the Prophet (saw).

## 4. Reporting many fabricated supplications in his writings,

- Here are some examples of his innovated (man-made) supplications:

i) In the supplication 'hizb Al-Nur' he says: "I ask You by the reverence due to teacher, by the sanctity of the Guiding Prophet, by the sacredness of the Seventy eight,…" (Reference 2. Pg. 39)

ii) In the supplication 'hizb Al-Sheikh' he mentions: "And make me the treasury of the Forty" (Reference 2. Pg. 52)

**Comment:** What is the sacredness of the Seventy-eight?! What or who is the treasury of the Forty?!

## 5. Scholars and Human Intellect

a. Keller says about Abdul-Waheed Ibn Zayd (ra) and Imam Abu Haneefa (ra) they ".. performed the Dawn prayer for forty years with the ablution made for the nightfall prayer.." (Reference 1. Pg.1023 & Pg. 1028)

**Comment:**

1. This is against the clear teaching of the Sunnah. The Prophet saw said: "I pray some of the night and I sleep some of the night." Sahih Bukhari. And therefore Nuh Keller is insulting Abu Haneefah and others by accusing them of disobeying the Sunnah.

2. It seems Nuh Keller is either lying, or has placed his intellect aside (as mentioned above), since it is humanly impossible for a person to refrain from sleep for (40 years x 365 days) 14,600 consecutive nights.

### 6. Promotes dancing and singing as a form of worship !

Keller says: "Individual motives, thoughts, and preoccupations are momentarily put aside by means of the sacred dance, of moving together as one, sublimating and transcending the limitary and personal through the timelessness of rhythm, conjoined with the melody of voices singing spiritual meanings." (Reference 3. Pg.19)

**Comment:**

1. Since when have singing and dancing become means of Worshipping Allah?

2. If these are indeed means then why are there no authentic Hadeeth on how to dance for Worship.

***REFERENCES:**

1. 'Reliance of the Traveler' by Nuh Ha Mim Keller
2. 'Invocations of the Shadhilhi Order' " by Nuh Ha Mim Keller
3. 'Tariqa notes' " by Nuh Ha Mim Keller